IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES
IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of Girouard et al. Serial No.: 10/682,421 Confirmation Number: 9616 Filed: 10/9/2003 Title: MITIGATING SELF- PROPAGATING E-MAIL VIRUSES Docket: AUS920030749US1	: Before the Examiner: : Thomas J Dailey : Group Art Unit: 2152 : Amy J. Pattillo : P.O. Box 161327 : Austin, Tx 78716 : 512-402-9820 *vox* : 512-306-0417 *fax*

APPEAL BRIEF UNDER 37 CFR §41.37

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     This Appeal Brief is submitted in support of the Appeal in the above-referenced application pursuant to a Notice of Appeal filed July 17, 2007 as required by 37 C.F.R. 41.31. This is an appeal from a final rejection dated April 18, 2007 of Claims 1, 3, 6-9, 1, 14-17, 19, and 22-24 of application serial number 10/682,421, filed on 10/9/2003.

I. Real Party in Interest

The real party in interest in the present application is the Assignee, International Business Machines Corporation of Armonk, New York, as evidenced by the Assignment set forth at Reel 014602, Frame 0884.

II. Related Appeals and Interferences

There are no Appeals or Interferences known to Appellant, Appellant's legal representative, or assignee which may be related to, directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the pending appeal. No decisions have been rendered by a court or the Board in any related applications.

III. Status of Claims

1. Status of All Claims in Application

    a. Claims Rejected: 1, 3, 6-9, 11, 14-17, 19, and 22-24.

    b. Claims Allowed or Confirmed: None.

    c. Claims Withdrawn from Consideration: None.

    d. Claims Objected to: None.

    e. Claims Cancelled: 2, 4, 5, 10, 12, 13, 18, 20, and 21.

2. Claims on Appeal

    a. The claims being appealed are: 1, 3, 6-9, 11, 14-17, 19, and 22-24.

    b. The claims being appealed stand finally rejected as noted by the Examiner in the Examiner's Action dated April 18, 2007. These rejected claims, which form the basis of this appeal, are reproduced in the attached Appendix.

IV. Status of Amendments

The Examiner finally rejected claims 1-4, 6-12, 14-20, and 22-24 in a final office action dated April 18, 2007.

In particular, the final office action dated April 18, 2007 rejected claims 2, 4, 10, 12, 18, and 20 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. Appellants filed an amendment after final dated July 16, 2007 canceling claims 2, 4, 10, 12, 18, and 20 for purposes of expediting appeal of the remaining claims. The Examiner entered the amendment after final canceling claims 2, 4, 10, 12, 18, and 20 as indicated in an Advisory Action dated August 8, 2007.

In addition, the final office action dated April 18, 2007 rejected claims 1-4, 7-12, 15-20, and 23-24 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hursey et al. (US Publication 2003/0023875) in view of Smithson et al. (US Patent 6,898,715). No amendments to claims 1, 3, 6-9, 11, 14-17, 19, and 22-24, which are on appeal, were made following the final office action dated April 18, 2007.

V. Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

Claim 1 is directed to a method for receiving a request to send an electronic mail message with a file attachment to multiple intended recipients. (Specification, paragraphs 0041, 0042, 0043, 0050). At least one number is calculated of the intended recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in an address book storing each of the intended recipients in association with at least one of multiple separate group identifiers. (Specification, paragraphs 0043 and 0045, Figure 3, element 312 and Figure 4). A maximum recipient limit is retrieved specified for a particular extension type of file attachment from among multiple extension types of file attachments and specified for at least one group identifier from among the separate group identifiers, wherein an extension type of the file attachment matches the particular extension type of the file attachment. (Specification, paragraphs 0043, 0046, 0047, and 0048, Figure 3, element 308 and Figure 5). The at least one number of recipients assigned to the at least one group identifier in the address book is compared with the maximum recipient limit. (Specification, paragraphs 0043, 0050, and 0051 and Figures 3 and 5). Responsive to the at least one number of recipients assigned to the at least one group identifier in the address book exceeding the maximum recipient limit for the at least one group identifier, a sender authorization is requested prior to sending the electronic mail message, such that if a virus is attempting to self-propagate by sending the electronic mail message the attempt is mitigated. (Specification, paragraphs 0043, 0054, and 0055 and Figures 3 and 8).

Claim 3 is directed to the method of claim 1, wherein receiving a request to send an electronic mail message with a file attachment is further directed to detecting a file embedded within the electronic mail message as a file attachment. (Specification, paragraph 0050).

Claim 6 is directed to the method of claim 1, wherein requesting a sender authorization prior to sending the electronic mail message is further directed to requesting at least one of an entry of a password as authorization and a manual sender input. (Specification, paragraphs 0054 and 0055 and Figure 8).

Claim 7 is directed to the method of claim 1 and is further directed to receiving the maximum recipient limit from at least one of a network administrator and a user (Specification, paragraph 0049).

Claim 8 is directed to the method of claim 1 and is further directed to alerting a network administrator that the electronic message was blocked, responsive to receiving a denial of sender authorization. (Specification, paragraph 0043).

Claims 9, 11, 14, 15, and 16 are directed to a computer system communicatively connected to a network having means for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses as described by the steps in claims 1, 3, 6, 7, and 8 respectively. (Specification, paragraphs 0029, 0030, 0038, 0039, and 0044 and Figure 1, element 100 and Figure 3, elements 300 and 302).

Claims 17, 19, 22, 23, and 24 are directed to a computer program product, on a nonvolatile or volatile recording medium, having program means recorded thereon for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses as described by the steps in claims 1, 3, 6, 7, and 8, respectively. (Specification, paragraph 0028).

VI. Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

1. Claims 1, 3, 6-9, 11, 14-17, 19, and 22-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Hursey et al. (US Publication 2003/0023875) in view of Smithson et al. (US Patent 6,898,715).

VII. Argument

1.   35 U.S.C. 103(a), Alleged Obviousness under Hursey in view of Smithson, Claims 1, 3, 6-9, 11, 14-17, 19, and 22-24

The Final Office Action rejects claims 1, 3, 6-9, 11, 14-17, 19, and 22-24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Hursey et al. (US Publication 2003/0023875) in view of Smithson et al. (US Patent 6,898,715). [Final Office Action, pp. 4-5] 35 U.S.C. §103(a) states that "a patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains." Appellants traverse the rejection of the claims as not obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). In addition, Appellants respectfully assert that the claims do not all stand or fall together.

Clams 1, 9, and 17

Claim 1, which is representative of claims 9 and 17 reads:

1.   A method for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, comprising:
            receiving a request to send an electronic mail message with a file attachment to a plurality of intended recipients;
            calculating at least one number of said plurality of intended recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in an address book storing each of said plurality of intended recipients in association with at least one of a plurality of separate group identifiers;
            retrieving a maximum recipient limit specified for a particular extension type of file attachment from among a plurality of extension types of file attachments and specified for at least one group identifier from among said plurality of separate group identifiers, wherein an extension type of said file attachment matches said particular extension type of said file attachment;
            comparing said at least one number of said plurality of recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in said address book with said maximum recipient limit; and

responsive to said at least one number of said plurality of recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in said address book exceeding said maximum recipient limit for said at least one group identifier, requesting a sender authorization prior to sending said electronic mail message, such that if a virus is attempting to self-propagate by sending said electronic mail message said attempt is mitigated.

The Final Office Action cites paragraph 0033, lines 3-11 and paragraph 0035, lines 3-5 of Hursey as reading on the element of receiving a request to send an electronic mail message with a file attachment to a plurality of intended recipients. [Final Office Action, p. 5] The Final Office Action cites paragraph 0033, lines 3-11 of Hursey as reading on the element of calculating at least one number of said plurality of intended recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in an address book storing each of said plurality of intended recipients in association with at least one of a plurality of separate group identifiers. [Final Office Action, p. 5] The Final Office Action cites paragraph 0033, lines 11-13 of Hursey as reading on the elements of retrieving a maximum recipient limit specified for at least one group identifier from among said plurality of separate group identifiers and comparing "a characteristic of said at least one intended recipient with said maximum recipient limit." [Final Office Action, p. 5] In addition, The Final Office Action cites paragraph 0033, lines 11-16 of Hursey as reading on responsive to said at least one number of said plurality of recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in said address book exceeding said maximum recipient limit for said at least one group identifier, paragraph 0033, lines 16-20 of Hursey as reading on requesting a sender authorization prior to sending said electronic mail message and paragraph 0033, lines 20-25 of Hursey as reading on such that if a virus is attempting to self-propagate by sending said electronic mail message said attempt is mitigated. [Final Office Action, pp. 5-6]

The Final Office Action states that "Hursey does not additionally disclose said maximum recipient limit also specifies for a particular extension type of file attachment from among a plurality of extension types of file attachments, wherein an extension type of said file attachment matches said particular extension type of said file attachment. Rather, Hursey only discloses a maximum recipient limit

for group identifiers not a recipient limit for group identifiers with specific file types." [Final Office Action, p. 6] However, the Final Office Action states that "Smithson discloses retrieving a maximum recipient limit (column 4, lines 24-44) specified for a particular extension type of file attachment from among a plurality of extension types of file attachments, wherein an extension type of said file attachment matches said particular extension type of said file attachment (column 4, lines 50-53)." [Final Office Action, p. 6] The Final Office Action concludes that "it would have been obvious at the time of the invention to combine the teaches of Hursey and Smithson thereby combining two known algorithms for preventing the propagation of undesirable email and in doing so creating a more robust overall algorithm." [Final Office Action, p. 6]

As noted in the Final Office Action under 35 USC §103(a) a patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed as described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. In *Graham v. John Deere*, the Supreme Court clarified that "under 103, in considering the obviousness or nonobviousness of the subject matter, the scope and content of the prior art are to be determined; differences between the prior art and the claims at issue are to be ascertained; and the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art resolved, in addition to evaluating evidence of secondary considerations." *Graham*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966).

The Examiner bears the initial burden of supporting any prima facie conclusion of obviousness. MPEP 2142. To establish a prima facie case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine the teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Third, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must

teach or suggest all the claim limitations. The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, and not based on Appellant's disclosure. *In re Vaeck*, 947, F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991).

As to the Examiner's burden of proving a prima facie case of obviousness, Appellants respectfully assert that the Final Office Action fails to prove a prima facie case of obviousness under Hursey in view of Smithson as to claims 1, 9 and 17 and therefore the claims should be allowed.

First, Appellants respectfully assert that a prima facie case of obviousness is not established as to claims 1, 9, and 17 because Hursey and Smithson, separately or in combination, do not teach or suggest <u>calculating at least one</u> <u>number of said plurality of intended recipients assigned to at least one group</u> <u>identifier in an address book storing each of said plurality of intended recipients</u> <u>in association with at least one of a plurality of separate group identifiers</u>. Appellants respond to the specific rejection of the element of <u>calculating at least</u> <u>one number of said plurality of intended recipients assigned to at least one group</u> <u>identifier in an address book storing each of said plurality of intended recipients</u> <u>in association with at least one of a plurality of separate group identifiers</u> as allegedly read upon by Hursey, paragraph 0033, lines 3-11. [Final Office Action, p. 5] Appellants respectfully assert that neither paragraph 0033 of Hursey, nor Hursey as a whole in combination with Smithson, teaches or suggests, each and every element of <u>calculating at least one number of said plurality of intended</u> <u>recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in an address book storing</u> <u>each of said plurality of intended recipients in association with at least one of a</u> <u>plurality of separate group identifiers</u>.

Appellants note that in general, Hursey describes a system for detecting e-mail propagated malware by "detecting if over a threshold number of addressees from within the address book of that email client are being sent an email or over a predetermined number of substantially identical emails are being sent by that email client." *Hursey*, abstract. Paragraph 0033, lines 3-11 of Hursey, which are cited by the Examiner as reading on the element of <u>calculating</u>

<u>at least one number of said plurality of intended recipients assigned to at least</u>
<u>one group identifier in an address book storing each of said plurality of intended</u>
<u>recipients in association with at least one of a plurality of separate group</u>
<u>identifiers</u>, read:

> At step 10, the system waits for a new e-mail message to be generated. When a new e-mail message is generated, processing proceeds to step 12 at which the addressees of the e-mail message are identified and compared with the contents of the address book for the client computer user who is sending the e-mail message and a determination made as to the percentage of the total address book addresses who are being addressed by the new e-mail message.

Thus, Hursey describes determining the percentage of the total address book addresses that are being addressed by the new e-mail message and comparing the percentage of the total book addresses with a threshold value. *Hursey*, paragraph 0033.

Hursey's address book and Hursey as a whole clearly do not reference, nor teach or suggest, any subdivisions within the address book. *Hursey*, paragraph 0033. Further, Hursey's address book and Hursey as a whole clearly do not teach or suggest calculating a number of recipients of an email who assigned to a particular group from among multiple separate groups identifiers within an address book. In contrast, claims 1, 9, and 17 teach calculating the number of intended recipients of an email that are also assigned within an address book to the same group identifier from among multiple separate group identifiers.

Therefore, because Hursey only describes calculating a percentage of recipients of an email of the total number of users in an address book and Hursey does not teach an address book that further assigns and stores recipients according to at least one of multiple separate group identifiers Hursey does not teach or suggest every element of <u>calculating at least one number of said</u> <u>plurality of intended recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in an</u> <u>address book storing each of said plurality of intended recipients in association</u> <u>with at least one of a plurality of separate group identifiers</u>. In addition, no

portion of Smithson is cited in the Final Office Action as describing an address book with subdivisions or calculating the number of intended recipients of an email that are identified in an address book and further assigned to a group identifier from among multiple separate group identifiers within the address book and no portion of Smithson as a whole teaches these elements. Therefore, Hursey in view of Smithson also does not teach or suggest every element of <u>calculating at least one number of said plurality of intended recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in an address book storing each of said plurality of intended recipients in association with at least one of a plurality of separate group identifiers</u>, a prima facie case of obviousness is not established as to claims 1, 9, and 17, the rejection under 35 USC §103(a) should be withdrawn and the claims should be allowed.

Second, Appellants respectfully assert that a prima facie case of obviousness is not established as to claims 1, 9, and 17 because there is no motivation or suggestion within Hursey or statement within the Final Office Action of motivation or suggestion within the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art for modifying Hursey to teach or suggest <u>calculating at least one number of said plurality of intended recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in an address book storing each of said plurality of intended recipients in association with at least one of a plurality of separate group identifiers</u>. In particular, Appellants respond to the Examiner's "Response to Arguments" in the Final Office Action regarding Hursey reading on the element of <u>calculating at least one number of said plurality of intended recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in an address book storing each of said plurality of intended recipients in association with at least one of a plurality of separate group identifiers</u>. [Final Office Action, p. 2] Appellants respectfully submit that the Examiner's arguments as to the teachings of Hursey require modifying Hursey in a manner which is not motivated or suggested by Hursey and that the modification does not teach or suggest each and every element of <u>calculating at least one number of said plurality of intended recipients assigned to at least one</u>

group identifier in an address book storing each of said plurality of intended
recipients in association with at least one of a plurality of separate group
identifiers,

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner responds to Appellants previous
arguments that Hursey does not teach or suggest each and every element of
calculating at least one number of said plurality of intended recipients assigned to
at least one group identifier in an address book storing each of said plurality of
intended recipients in association with at least one of a plurality of separate
group identifiers. [Final Office Action, p. 2] In particular, in the Final Office
Action, the Examiner disagrees with Appellants' assertion and as to the element
of calculating at least one number of said plurality of intended recipients assigned
to at least one group identifier in an address book storing each of said plurality of
intended recipients in association with at least one of a plurality of separate
group identifiers states:

> "the new limitation in essence, according to the examiner's
> interpretation, recites an address book which is broken up into
> subsets based upon group identifiers and then calculates numbers
> for each subset based upon the total number of intended recipients
> of an email that are part of each subset. The examiner asserts
> Hursey does teach address books with group identifiers associated
> with address in paragraph 0033, lines 3-11. In this citation, Hursey
> discloses an "address book for the client computer user." The
> client computer user is the group identifier for the addresses in this
> address book. Furthermore, the "at least one of a plurality of
> separate group identifiers" in the claim becomes a plurality of client
> computer users in Hursey's teaching. Therefore, the address book
> recited in the claim is a plurality of client address books in Hursey's
> teaching with subsets of them being individual client address
> books. Accordingly, the newly amended claims fail to overcome
> the prior art record." [Final Office Action, pp. 2-3]

Claims 1, 9, and 17 specifically teach an address book storing each of
multiple recipients in association with at least one of multiple separate group
identifiers. Claims 1, 9, and 17 as a whole, teach calculating, for each of the
group identifiers, the number of intended recipients for a particular email who are
assigned to that group identifier in the address book. The Examiner interprets

the element of group identifier in claims 1, 9, and 17 as reading on the "client computer user" of Hursey and interprets the element of the plurality of group identifiers in claims 1, 9, and 17 as reading on "multiple client computer users" in Hursey. [Final Office Action, pp. 2-3] Thus, the Examiner interprets the address book with recipients associated with one or multiple group identifiers taught in claims 1, 9, and 17 as instead teaching a plurality of client address books with the group identifiers being the individual client address books.

Appellants respectfully submit that the Examiner has taken a phrase in Hursey of "an address book for a client computer user" and modified the teachings of Hursey in a manner that is not suggested by Hursey nor has the Examiner provided a statement as to why these modifications of Hursey would have been obvious to one with skill in the relevant art at the time of the invention based. First, Hursey describes an address book for a client computer user, but Hursey does not teach or suggest an address book that includes a plurality of client address books of multiple client computer users. Thus, there is no basis in Hursey for modification to teach an address book that includes a plurality of client address books. Second, Hursey does not teach a system for calculating the number of recipients to an email which are included in an address book, where that address book is multiple client address books with subsets based on group identifiers being individual client address books. Thus, there is no basis in Hursey for the Examiner's statement that Hursey teaches an address book that is actually a plurality of client address books with subsets being individual client address books. Third, Hursey does not teach any infrastructure whereby the individual address books of multiple client computer users would be combined into a single address book of recipients grouped in individual client address books.

Therefore, in view of the previous assertions, not only is there is no basis for the Examiner' statement that Hursey teaches a plurality of client computer users or that the address book of Hursey is a combination of address books of a plurality of client computer users with each client computer user being a group identifier, there is no motivation or suggestion for modifying Hursey as suggested

by the Examiner. Because there is no motivation or suggestion for modifying Hursey to describe an address book that is a plurality of client address books, where each "address book recited in the claim is a plurality of client address books in Hursey's teaching with subsets of them being individual client address books" as asserted by the Examiner, Hursey still fails to teach or suggest each and every element of <u>calculating at least one number of said plurality of intended recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in an address book storing each of said plurality of intended recipients in association with at least one of a plurality of separate group identifiers</u>, a prima facie case of obviousness is not established as to claims 1, 9, and 17, the rejection under 35 USC §103(a) should be withdrawn and the claims should be allowed.

Claims 3, 6-8, 11, 14-16, 19, and 22-24

Appellants respectfully assert that because claims 3, 6-8, 11, 14-16, 19, and 22-24 are dependent upon claims 1, 9, and 17, for which the Examiner has not proved a prima facie case of obviousness, a prima facie case of obviousness is also not established with reference to claims 3, 6-8, 11, 14-16, 19, and 22-24.

CONCLUSION

It is therefore respectfully requested that the Examiner's rejection of claims 1-27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be reversed and the claims allowed.

Please charge the fee of $500.00 for submission of an Appeal Brief under 37 CFR 41.20(b)(2) to IBM Corporation Deposit Account No. 09-0447. No additional filing fee is believed to be necessary; however, in the event that any additional fee is required, please charge it to IBM Corporation Deposit Account No. 09-0447.

Respectfully submitted,

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VIII. Claims Appendix

The Claims involved in the Appeal are as follows:

1.   A method for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, comprising:

    receiving a request to send an electronic mail message with a file attachment to a plurality of intended recipients;

    calculating at least one number of said plurality of intended recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in an address book storing each of said plurality of intended recipients in association with at least one of a plurality of separate group identifiers;

    retrieving a maximum recipient limit specified for a particular extension type of file attachment from among a plurality of extension types of file attachments and specified for at least one group identifier from among said plurality of separate group identifiers, wherein an extension type of said file attachment matches said particular extension type of said file attachment;

    comparing said at least one number of said plurality of recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in said address book with said maximum recipient limit; and

    responsive to said at least one number of said plurality of recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in said address book exceeding said maximum recipient limit for said at least one group identifier, requesting a sender authorization prior to sending said electronic mail message, such that if a virus is attempting to self-propagate by sending said electronic mail message said attempt is mitigated.

3.   The method according to claim 1 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, wherein receiving a request to send an electronic mail message with a file attachment further comprises:

detecting a file embedded within said electronic mail message as a file attachment.

6.   The method according to claim 1 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, wherein requesting a sender authorization prior to sending said electronic mail message further comprises:

requesting at least one of an entry of a password as authorization and a manual sender input.

7.   The method according to claim 1 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, further comprising:

receiving said maximum recipient limit from at least one of a network administrator and a user.

8.   The method according to claim 1 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, further comprising:

responsive to receiving a denial of said sender authorization, alerting a network administrator that said electronic mail message was blocked.

9.   A system for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, comprising:

a computing system communicatively connected to a network;
said computing system further comprising:

means for receiving a request to send an electronic mail message with a file attachment to a plurality of intended recipients;

means for calculating at least one number of said plurality of intended recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in an address book storing each of said plurality of intended recipients in association with at least one of a plurality of separate group identifiers;

means for retrieving a maximum recipient limit specified for a particular extension type of file attachment from among a plurality of extension types of file attachments and specified for at least one group identifier from among said plurality of separate group identifiers, wherein an extension type of said file attachment matches said particular extension type of said file attachment;

means for comparing said at least one number of said plurality of recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in said address book with said maximum recipient limit; and

means for requesting a sender authorization prior to sending said electronic mail message, responsive to at least one number of said plurality of recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in said address book exceeding said maximum recipient limit for said at least one group identifier.

11.   The system according to claim 9 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, wherein said means for receiving a request to send an electronic mail message with a file attachment further comprises:

means for detecting a file embedded within said electronic mail message as a file attachment.

14.   The system according to claim 9 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, wherein said means for requesting a sender authorization prior to sending said electronic mail message further comprises:

means for requesting at least one of an entry of a password as authorization and a manual sender input.

15.   The system according to claim 9 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, further comprising:

means for receiving said maximum recipient limit from at least one of a network administrator and a user.

16.   The system according to claim 9 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, further comprising:

means responsive to receiving a denial of said sender authorization, for alerting a network administrator that said electronic mail message was blocked.

17.   A computer program product for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, comprising:

a volatile or non-volatile recording medium;

means, recorded on said recording medium, for receiving a request to send an electronic mail message with a file attachment to a plurality of intended recipients;

means, recorded on said recording medium, for calculating at least one number of said plurality of intended recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in an address book storing each of said plurality of intended recipients in association with at least one of a plurality of separate group identifiers;

means, recorded on said recording medium, for retrieving a maximum recipient limit specified for a particular extension type of file attachment from among a plurality of extension types of file attachments and specified for at least one group identifier from among said plurality of separate group identifiers, wherein an extension type of said file attachment matches said particular extension type of said file attachment;

means, recorded on said recording medium, for comparing said at least one number of said plurality of recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in said address book with said maximum recipient limit;

means, recorded on said recording medium, for requesting a sender authorization prior to sending said electronic mail message, responsive to said at least one number of said plurality of recipients assigned to at least one group identifier in said address book exceeding said maximum recipient limit for said at least one group identifier.

19.   The computer program product according to claim 17 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, wherein said means for receiving a request to send an electronic mail message with a file attachment further comprises:

means, recorded on said recording medium, for detecting a file embedded within said electronic mail message as a file attachment.

22.   The computer program product according to claim 17 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, wherein said means for requesting a sender authorization prior to sending said electronic mail message further comprises:

means, recorded on said recording medium, for requesting at least one of an entry of a password as authorization and a manual sender input.

23.   The computer program product according to claim 17 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, further comprising:

means, recorded on said recording medium, for receiving said maximum recipient limit from at least one of a network administrator and a user.

24.   The computer program product according to claim 17 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, further comprising:

means, recorded on said recording medium, for alerting a network administrator that said electronic mail message was blocked, responsive to receiving a denial of said sender authorization.

IX. Evidence Appendix

There is no evidence submitted pursuant to §§ 1.130, 1.131, or 1.132 or any other evidence entered by the Examiner that is relied upon by Appellants in the appeal.

X. Related Proceedings Appendix

There are no decisions rendered by a court or the Board in any related appeals.